

## **Municipal Court Judges**

### **Department Description**

R.C. 1901.01 established the Franklin County Municipal Court. A judge is a public official appointed or elected to preside and to administer the law in a court of justice. A full term of court for a judge consists of six years. The court has fourteen judges in the general division and one judge in the environmental division. The judges elect annually one of their peers to the position of administrative and presiding judge. A visiting judge is necessary in certain emergency situations.

The judges process both criminal and traffic misdemeanor jury and non-jury trials, arraignments, preliminary hearings on felony cases and set bond on all criminal charges. They further handle civil cases with a monetary jurisdiction not to exceed \$15,000, exclusive of interest and costs. The small claim's division, under the judges' supervision, handles cases where the demand does not exceed \$3,000, exclusive of interest and costs.

Each week, a different judge is assigned to the duty session to handle a variety of responsibilities which include decisions concerning applications for warrants to search, applications by the clerk to strike improper or incomplete pleadings, motions to dismiss filed by the prosecutor pursuant to Crim. R. 48, cognovit notes, motions to excuse jurors, probable cause hearings, motions for default judgments filed in unassigned cases, determination as to whether an evidentiary hearing on the issue of damages is necessary and performance of civil wedding ceremonies on a scheduled basis.

The geographic jurisdiction of the court is all of Franklin County, which has a population of over one million, and those portions of the City of Columbus that extend beyond the boundaries of Franklin County.

The jurisdiction and powers of the environmental division differ from those of the general division in several important respects.

R.C. 1901.181 gives the environmental division exclusive jurisdiction to enforce in any civil action or any criminal action any local building, housing, air pollution, sanitation, health, fire, zoning or safety code, ordinance, or regulation applicable to premises used or intended for use as a place of human habitation, buildings, structures or any other real property subject to any such code, ordinance, or regulation. Pursuant to R.C. 1901.181 and R.C. 1901.17, there is no monetary limit on the cases that fall within the environmental division's exclusive jurisdiction.

R.C. 1901.131 grants the environmental division injunctive powers.

To support the Judiciary, the Court has several divisions/programs through which court services are provided to the public. They are as follows:

- Court Administration that consists of the Court Security Program, Court Investigation, Volunteer Services Program, Vehicle Immobilization Program and Spanish interpreting
- Court Reporters, Assignment Office, Jury Office, Judges and Magistrates Bailiffs, Service Bailiffs, Secretaries and the Small Claims Division/Dispute Resolution Program
- The Department of Probation Services consists of administration, supervision services and investigation services. There are specialized probation supervision programs that include the Chemical Abuse Program (CAP), Multiple OMVI Offender Program (MOP), Sex Offender Program and the Mental Health Offices. There is a Domestic Violence Program and a Community Sanctions Unit consisting of the Supervised Community Service Program and the Restitution Program. There is a Provided No Conviction Program and an Intensive Supervision Residential Program (ISRP). To support all of these programs in the Probation Department there is a Support Services Unit consisting of receptionists, intake assignment coordinators, transcriptionists and support relief/liaison officers

### **Department Mission**

#### Judiciary

To provide to all equal access, professional, fair and impartial treatment; timely disposition of cases without unnecessary delay; a just resolution of all court matters, and to safeguard the constitutional rights of all litigants.

#### Administration

The mission of the employees is to implement the policies and procedures (mandates) established by the Judiciary and the Legislature in a professional and dedicated manner and to ensure accessibility, fairness and courtesy in the administration of justice.

### **Strategic Priorities for 2003**

- To provide a safer, more secure environment within the Municipal Court building for elected officials, employees and the public.
- To replace outdated security equipment, made possible by establishment of the Court's secure facilities fund.
- To continue to provide competitive wages for the employees of the Municipal Court in order to maintain and attract quality staff.
- To secure funding in 2003 for the specialized probation supervision program, whose grant funding expired in 2002. This program, which requires

defendants be enrolled in treatment, provides judges a viable sentencing option to jail for repeat offenders with mental health issues and those convicted of sexual offenses. Defendants that are jailed instead of being placed in this program are more inclined to re-offend after time served.

- Enhance services in the following areas:
  - Security
  - Computerization
  - Appointment of Counsel
  - Communication to the public

### **2003 Budget Issues**

- Funding of \$10,301,150 is provided for 172 full-time and 11 part-time positions in the Franklin County Municipal Court Judges' 2003 budget.
- Court security efforts will continue in 2003; however, funding has been shifted to a special projects fund that was created in 2002 for the purpose of providing security to the Courts. This secure facilities fee will support funding of approximately \$886,000 and 16 full-time staff members.
- The Municipal Court Judges' 2003 budget includes \$1,341,944 for contractual services. Of this amount, \$702,000 is allocated to the contract for appointed counsel, \$130,000 for juror fees, \$90,000 for language interpretation services and \$62,000 for competency examinations and evaluations.

DEPARTMENT FINANCIAL SUMMARY					
DIVISION SUMMARY	2000 Actual	2001 Actual	2002 Appropriated	2002 Estimated	2003 Proposed
Municipal Court Judges	\$ 11,415,669	\$ 11,880,590	\$ 12,254,951	\$ 12,217,578	\$ 12,468,578
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$ 11,415,669</b>	<b>\$ 11,880,590</b>	<b>\$ 12,254,951</b>	<b>\$ 12,217,578</b>	<b>\$ 12,468,578</b>

DEPARTMENT SUMMARY BY CHARACTER					
MUNICIPAL CT JUDGES GENERAL FUND	2000 Actual	2001 Actual	2002 Appropriated	2002 Estimated	2003 Proposed
Personnel	\$ 8,874,773	\$ 10,094,811	\$ 10,144,595	\$ 10,253,091	\$ 10,301,150
Materials & Supplies	67,808	133,698	66,663	63,000	61,900
Services	1,885,474	1,330,240	1,423,250	1,311,498	1,341,944
Capital	49,745	-	-	-	-
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$ 10,877,800</b>	<b>\$ 11,558,749</b>	<b>\$ 11,634,508</b>	<b>\$ 11,627,589</b>	<b>\$ 11,704,994</b>
MUNICIPAL CT JUDGES COMPUTER FUND	2000 Actual	2001 Actual	2002 Appropriated	2002 Estimated	2003 Proposed
Personnel	\$ 62,494	\$ 86,540	\$ 107,593	\$ 106,984	\$ 113,209
Materials & Supplies	29,007	33,015	69,100	77,094	305,500
Services	427,536	188,579	308,750	335,342	331,875
Capital	18,833	13,707	135,000	70,569	13,000
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$ 537,869</b>	<b>\$ 321,841</b>	<b>\$ 620,443</b>	<b>\$ 589,989</b>	<b>\$ 763,584</b>

DEPARTMENT SUMMARY BY FUND					
<b>FUND SUMMARY</b>	<b>2000 Actual</b>	<b>2001 Actual</b>	<b>2002 Appropriated</b>	<b>2002 Estimated</b>	<b>2003 Proposed</b>
General Fund	\$ 10,877,800	\$ 11,558,749	\$ 11,634,508	\$ 11,627,589	\$ 11,704,994
Municipal Court Computer Fund	537,869	321,841	620,443	589,989	763,584
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$ 11,415,669</b>	<b>\$ 11,880,590</b>	<b>\$ 12,254,951</b>	<b>\$ 12,217,578</b>	<b>\$ 12,468,578</b>

DEPARTMENT PERSONNEL SUMMARY					
<b>DEPARTMENT</b>	<b>FT/PT*</b>	<b>2000 Actual</b>	<b>2001 Actual</b>	<b>2002 Authorized</b>	<b>2003 Authorized</b>
Municipal Court Judges	FT	172	183	188	172
	PT	10	10	11	11
Court Computer Fund	FT	2	2	2	2
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>184</b>	<b>195</b>	<b>201</b>	<b>185</b>
*FT=Full-Time PT=Part-Time					

## Municipal Court Judges

### PROGRAM SUMMARY- COURT JUDGES

Program/Activity	Description	2002 Budgeted			2003 Budgeted		
		FT	PT	Proposed	FT	PT	Proposed
Administration	The court administration section is under the general direction of the bench and, through the administrative judge, is the vehicle by which non-judicial policies of the court are carried out on a daily basis. Such a structure enables the judges to focus their attentions on judicial, rather than administrative, responsibilities. Court administration principal responsibilities are as follows: personnel management; fiscal management; purchasing; appointment of counsel for indigent defendants; liaison with other courts, governmental entities and private agencies; public information and report management; settlement week; secretarial services; and appointment of interpreters and security management.	59	6	\$ 4,719,097	43	6	\$ 4,616,645
Assignment Office	The assignment office controls the case flow management of a case immediately upon its input into the computer system. The office is responsible for making individual case assignments to the judges in a random rotation for criminal and traffic cases when a plea of not guilty has been entered in arraignment, and in civil cases when an answer or motion has been filed. In addition, the assignment office prepares individual judges' and magistrates' courtsheets and boardsheets; notifies plaintiffs, defendants, prosecutors, attorneys and suburban solicitors of all court hearings; schedules and maintains an up-to-date status of all active cases assigned to the judges and magistrates; and processes all motions and pleadings.	13	1	651,441	13	1	687,872
Service Bailiffs	The service bailiff division assists litigants and attorneys by efficiently handling and delivering court documents and the timely enforcement of judgment remedies. Service bailiffs serve summonses for civil, forcible entry and detainer, criminal, traffic and judgment debtor cases. In addition, they serve complaints and subpoenas, enforce replevins, executions, orders of attachment and garnishments, writs of restitution; and handle evictions. Among their other duties, service bailiffs are responsible for recovery of property from defendants and collection of monetary awards as a consequence of judgments won by plaintiffs.	21	-	1,181,610	21	-	1,036,380
Courtroom Bailiffs	Courtroom bailiffs coordinate activities in the courtrooms of judges and magistrates. Bailiffs schedule cases and, on a daily basis, provide information to the public regarding the status of pending cases. Their responsibilities touch many functional areas of the justice system from court administration to the Clerk, from probation services to the jury commissioner.	22	-	1,409,306	22	-	1,488,265
Probation Services	The department of probation services is an effective sentencing tool which the Judges use extensively as an alternative to incarceration for select offenders. Probation services consist of the following: administration, regular supervision, non-reporting probation, domestic violence program, chemical abuse program, multiple OMVI offender program, sex offender program, investigation services, community service program, restitution program and provided no convictions program.	54	1	2,858,648	54	1	3,158,894
Small Claims	The small claims division was established to provide citizens with a simplified procedure for bringing civil suits for sums of \$3,000 or less. While attorneys are permitted, they are not required. The office provides forms and assistance to individuals wishing to file claims, motions and writs of execution. This office is closely interwoven with the Court's dispute resolution program that schedules and conducts mediation in civil cases for the Court.	5	1	268,190	5	1	280,559
Court Reporters	Court reporters are responsible for making a verbatim record of all court proceedings, reading back any and all portions of court proceedings, preparing verbatim transcripts of court proceedings and maintaining records on court exhibits.	14	2	925,151	14	2	952,628
Jury Commissioner	The office of the jury commissioner is responsible for summoning citizens to serve as jurors, randomly selecting jurors for panels, postponing and rescheduling jury service, and maintaining information on prospective jurors.	2	-	241,508	2	-	247,335
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>190</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>\$ 12,254,951</b>	<b>174</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>\$ 12,468,578</b>